

# *Private Investigator*

FEBRUARY 1998

## **Private Investigator / Qualified Manager Requirements for Licensure**

A private investigator is an individual who (1) investigates crimes, (2) investigates the identity, business, occupation, honesty, etc. of a person; (3) investigates the location of lost or stolen property, (4) investigates the cause of fires, losses, accidents, or damage or injury; or (5) secures evidence for use in court. Private investigators may protect persons *only* if such services are incidental to an investigation; they may **not** protect property. An individual, partnership, or corporation licensed as a private investigator may employ a qualified manager to manage the business on a day-to-day basis. To be eligible to apply for licensure as a private investigator/qualified manager, you must meet the following requirements:

- Be 18 or older.
- Undergo a criminal history background check through the Department of Justice to be evaluated on an individual basis.
- Have three years (2,000 hours each year, totalling 6,000 hours) of compensated experience in investigative work; or a law or police science degree plus two years (4,000 hours) of experience; or an AA degree in police science, criminal law, or justice plus 2 1/2 years (5,000 hours) of experience. Experience must be certified by your employer and have been received while you were employed as a sworn law enforcement officer, military police officer, insurance adjuster, employee of a licensed PI or reposessor, or arson investigator for a public fire suppression agency. [Work as a process server, public records researcher, custodial attendant for a law enforcement agency, bailiff, agent who collects debts in writing or by telephone after the debtor has been located, or person who repossesses property after it has been located is not considered qualifying experience.]
- Submit your completed application with two recent photographs, two fingerprint cards, \$82 (\$50 application and examination fee and \$32 Department of Justice fingerprint processing fee) to the Department of Consumer Affairs Licensing Division, P.O. Box 989002, West Sacramento, CA 95798-9002.
- Pass a two-hour multiple-choice examination covering laws and regulations, terminology, civil and criminal liability, evidence handling, undercover investigations, and surveillance. The examination is administered by the Department of Consumer Affairs at least every other month in Northern and Southern

*To become licensed by the California Department of Consumer Affairs as a private investigator or qualified manager, you need to meet these requirements. The examination is given at least every other month in Northern and Southern California.*

California. It may be taken orally by prior arrangement. Examination dates are included with the application package. A copy of the Private Investigator Act will be sent with your exam notification.

- Upon notification that you have passed the examination, you must submit a licensing fee of \$175 to the Department of Consumer Affairs Licensing Division, P.O. Box 989002, West Sacramento, CA 95798-9002.

### **Firearms Permit:**

Whether you work as a private investigator or qualified manager, you may not carry a gun on duty without having been issued a firearms permit by the Department of Consumer Affairs. To apply for a firearms permit, you must complete: (1) a course in the powers to arrest, (2) a course in the carrying and use of firearms, and (3) be a citizen or have permanent legal alien status. Submit an application with two sets of fingerprint cards for criminal record screening and \$164 (\$80 firearm application fee, \$32 Department of Justice fingerprint processing fee, \$24 Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint processing fee, and \$28 firearm eligibility application fee) to the Department of Consumer Affairs Licensing Division, P.O. Box 989002, West Sacramento, CA 95798-9002.

- (1) The two-hour powers to arrest training covers responsibilities and ethics in citizen arrest, relationship with police, limitations on power to arrest, restrictions on searches and seizures, criminal and civil liabilities, and personal and employer liability. The training and exam may be administered by any licensee.
- (2) The 14-hour firearms (8 hours classroom, 6 hours range) training course covers moral and legal aspects, firearms nomenclature, weapon handling and shooting fundamentals, emergency procedures, and range training. The course must be given by a certified firearms training instructor. Written and range exams are administered at the end of the course. Costs of training are determined by the training facility. For a list of state-licensed training schools, call 1-800-952-5210. Schools must also be approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education. To find out if a school is approved, call the Bureau at 916-445-3427. Note: a firearms qualification card expires two years from the date of issuance. An applicant must requalify four times during the life of the permit: twice during the first year after the date of issuance, and twice during the second year. Requalifications must be at least four months apart.

*A firearms permit issued by the Department does NOT authorize carrying a concealed weapon. A concealed weapon may NOT be carried on duty without a permit issued by local authorities.*

### **Tear Gas Permit:**

The law requires those who wish to carry tear gas on duty to complete two-hour training approved by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

### **Insurance:**

A private investigator who carries a firearm or provides armed bodyguard services must have \$1 million in insurance—\$500,000 for one loss due to bodily injury or death and \$500,000 for one loss due to injury or destruction of property.

To request an application for licensure as a private investigator or qualified manager, call 916-322-4000 or 1-800-952-5210.